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life, beginning with a general enlargement of the lymph glands, first in the cervical, then in the axillary and groin. The spleen may be enlarged.

*Blood.*—The most striking feature is the increase of lymphocytes, which often reach 99 per cent. The small lymphocytes are found in the majority of the chronic cases although there are a few types and so called "fragile" cells.

### III. ATYPICAL LEUKEMIA

These are cases in part myeloid and in part lymphoid

*Diagnosis.*—The diagnosis is afforded at once by the differential blood count in the majority of cases.

*Prognosis.*—Recovery in leukemia is practically unknown.

*Treatment.*—There are certain remedies which have an influence upon the disease. Arsenic is the best drug which has a positive value in the disease. Benzol, quinine, tuberculin and X-rays have reduced the glands, spleen, and leucocyte count. At the Huntington Hospital, radium is the only treatment given, as we consider this the most efficacious. A series of treatments will markedly reduce the size of the spleen and the white blood count may return to normal for a period. However, there are curious remissions in the disease which render therapeutic deductions very fallacious. Excision of the spleen has been performed many times with few recoveries.

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## THE NEGRO PROBLEM AS IT APPEARS TO A PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

BY SARAH B. MEYERS, R.N.

*Fulton, Kentucky*

No greater task confronts the south to-day than that of converting the southern negro into a being who recognizes the laws of health and sanitation and who is willing to put them into practice in his every-day living. The magnitude of this undertaking cannot be grasped by those who are not brought face to face with the situation, but a visiting nurse in a west Kentucky town, who comes into daily contact with the negroes in their homes—or shacks, more accurately speaking—feels that the people of the community must be awakened to the fact that, through these negroes, disease is brought into the homes, and that, for the sake of their own health and happiness, if for no other reason, they should coöperate with the health officers, doctors, nurses and health and welfare organizations in an effort to

teach these people cleanliness, better modes of living, and the prevention of disease.

Go with me for a little while into one of these homes where the income is sufficient to ensure comfort and a few luxuries—a home that would be spoken of as representing the middle class in a less democratic country. The visiting nurse, being a privileged character, may enter the back door, so we make our advent into the kitchen. More often than not we shall find a dusky damsel presiding over the cook stove and calling herself mistress of ceremonies in that particular sphere. It is her blessed privilege to juggle dish pans and dish cloths according to her own notion, and, though she may be covered with disease germs, she has probably never heard of them.

Those who employed her took the trouble to find out if she were a good cook and if she were honest, but did not concern themselves with finding out whether or not she might be infected with tuberculosis or some other disease that would be communicated to those around her.

Follow me into the nursery and we shall find that by no art of persuasion are we able to coax the smaller children from the arms of the little colored girl who often has the care of them for the greater part of the day. Remembering our slogan, "Save the Babies," we realize at once the importance of having this same little colored girl in an environment of health and cleanliness when in her own home.

As we leave, we see a negro woman coming up the walk, balancing a huge basket of freshly-ironed clothing, and we cannot help wondering, as indeed we have a right to wonder, upon what kind of beds and chairs these clothes have been lying since they were sent out on Monday, and whether they are being brought back in proper condition.

All effort toward sanitation and prevention of disease will be for naught if the people do not protect themselves against these outside evils by getting at the root of them, even though the process be slow.

My heart sank within me after my first visit to the negro quarters. Large families were huddled together in single rooms, the only redeeming feature of which was that they were always assured of plenty of fresh air because of the numerous cracks. Often I have found two or three lying ill in the same room, with almost no bed-clothing or fire, and usually there was a case of tuberculosis, this disease being very rampant and very fatal among the negro population of the south.

If you show these humble creatures that you are really their friend and that you are trying to help them to better their condition,

they are usually very responsive. A few visible results soon gave me encouragement.

At my request, worn, dirty floor coverings were replaced by clean strips of matting, or, better still, by cleanly scrubbed floors, for I did not hesitate to demonstrate to them, aside from simply telling them of the cleansing virtues of soap and hot water.

There is one family under my observation, where the mother goes out to work every day, leaving her three small children alone, the little four-year-old girl having the entire care of the eight months old baby. The little nurse is such a baby herself that she has to sit in the same position, with the baby balanced on her lap just where the mother has placed it, until she returns from work. The father is a shiftless creature who seems to feel very little responsibility. It is needless to say that under such conditions the children were almost without clothing, were very scantily fed, and were dirty beyond description.

With the aid of some neighbors and a generous supply of hot water and soap, I spent one morning chasing microbes and dirt from this cabin and its inmates, and I was amply repaid by the expression on the face of the little four-year-old, after we had given her a bath and had dressed her in fresh, clean clothing, probably the first she had ever had.

While so much of my work has been concerned with just such deplorable conditions as these, I have discovered some very quaint and interesting characters among these people, that have given me a respite from such depressing scenes as the one I have just described.

In a very short time after my arrival I made the acquaintance of a real old slave negress and she and I became the best of friends. Though she has been married no less than three times, she is known to the entire community merely as "Aunt Net," and I discovered, while trying to find her insurance policy amidst a whole family tree of policies, that she answered to any one of the names of her three departed husbands. Be that as it may, Aunt Net has managed to retain only a bitter memory respecting them, and often gives me the most enlightening and discouraging discourses on matrimony that can be imagined.

One of Aunt Net's neighbors has proven no less interesting, for he is the typical old grey-haired southern slave, with his stove-pipe hat, and I think from his frequent visits next door, that "Uncle George" is going to succeed in persuading the old woman that the fact that she has been three times disappointed is no reason why she should not give him a fair chance.

Miss L. and I took a snapshot of each of them one morning and

Aunt Net insisted that we come back later and take another of her in her pink silk dress, with her hair "all fixed up" and her waist "all pulled in tight"; we are looking forward to that day with as much anticipation as she.

Since my coming to this town I have, with the aid of the president of the local Red Cross Chapter and some interested members, succeeded in organizing a Red Cross Unit among the negroes. The superintendent of one of their schools and some of their teachers have shown great interest, and in a very short while they enrolled thirty members, while sixty-five colored children are members of the Junior Red Cross. Of course they cannot make surgical dressings because of lack of equipment, but they are knitting and are making hospital garments for their own soldiers. While assisting to that extent in war work, they will be made to feel that they really have a part in the fight for right and justice, which, in itself, will be a step toward uplifting them.

On the night of their organization they had a musical program prepared. A speaker of their own race, who is chaplain in the army, delivered a very forceful patriotic address. He emphasized the fact that his people knew no other flag than the Stars and Stripes and cited instances in American history that proved the negro to be patriotic.

Their interest in the Red Cross work was gratifying, though they dealt our efforts an unintentional blow when they arose and sang, as only southern darkies can sing, "I Ain't Goin' a Study War No Mo'." Since then, I have found that they like to use this song as a sort of doxology in all of their Red Cross meetings.

I have been asked to meet them in their churches and societies and to explain the meaning of the Red Cross organization and its work. On these occasions, after being formally introduced as the "Sick Nurse," I have seized the opportunity to give them some suggestions along the lines of sanitation and cleanliness in connection with instructions on the work of the Red Cross.

I have recently organized a Little Mothers' Club among the school girls, in which they seem to take as much, or even more interest than do the girls in the classes of the white schools.

Sometimes the work among the southern negroes seems very discouraging, but if the seemingly impossible is to be accomplished with this race, some one will have to do the pioneer work, so if it happens to fall to the lot of those of us who are at present laboring in this field, we can at least comfort ourselves with the vision of a time to come when our efforts, that now often seem fruitless, will be looked back upon as the germ of a reformation concerning health and sanitation among the negroes of the south that will mean much more to every southern home than we should now venture to prophesy.